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COMICS
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AUTHORITY

Dennis the Menace

No. 42

10c



the Cookie Jar

INSIDE STORIES OF DENNIS THE MENACE

HOW TO BE A CARTOONIST



Hank Ketchum, creator of "Dennis The Menace", tells how he became one of America's top cartoonists.

MANY readers ask me how to become cartoonists. I can tell them in one word—practice. That answer may seem too simple, but basically it is the main answer. However, it may help to explain if I trace back my own experience.

I have been drawing "Dennis The Menace" for over nine years. Before that I was a free-lance cartoonist for six years, submitting gag cartoons to the magazines, and doing advertising work. During World War II, I worked for four years doing cartoons and posters for War Bond promotion for the U. S. Treasury Dept. Still earlier, I worked for the animated cartoons studios in Hollywood for almost three years. In fact, I have been drawing ever since I was old enough to hold a pencil.

This will give you some idea of what I mean by my one word of advice—practice.

Any art course you can take at school will help you. There are many books on cartooning in the Public Libraries which will give you the fundamentals, what equipment to use, and so on. There are mail order schools of cartooning, notably The Famous Cartoonists Course, Westport, Conn. But all of these are of no use unless you practice.

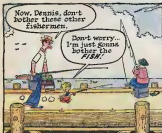
Sound like hard work? Not if you love to draw—and that is the first requirement. Then all your practice will not be work, but fun. You will get many rejections and discouragements. But if you love to draw, and practice all you can, chances are you will make the grade. At least you'll have fun trying!

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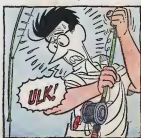
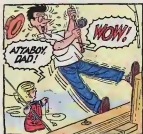
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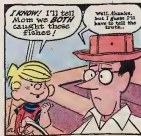
BETWEEN DENNIS and the DEEP BLUE SEA

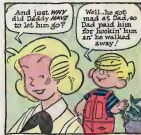
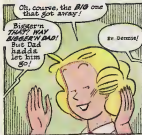






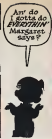


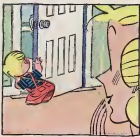


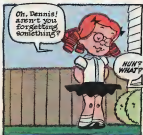
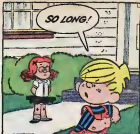


HAPPY JUMP YEAR











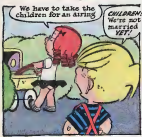
I SAID isn't Leap Year *KID*?

YEARGHMMETRICANDY!



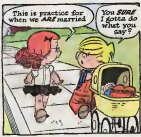
You've had enough now... we have things to do.

What things?



We have to take the children for an airing

CHILDREN! We're not married *YET!*



This is practice for when we *ARE* married

You *SURE!* I gotta do what you say?

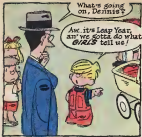


OF COURSE! In Leap Year *WOMEN* are *BOSS!*

HUH! YOU'VE been *BOSSY* ever since I'VE known you!

HEY LOOK!

OH, NO!
HAW HAW



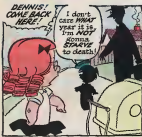
What's going on, Dennis?

Aw, it's Leap Year, an' we gotta do what *GIRLS* tell us!



That's *RIGHT* isn't it, Dad? *MOM* said so!

Well, let's talk it over at dinner.



DENNIS! COME BACK HERE!

I don't care *WHAT* year it is, I'm *NOT* gonna *STARVE* to death!



Er... hi, honey! Where have you been all dressed up?

Nowhere...but we're going out as soon as you and Dennis change.

HI, MOM!



WE ARE?

Yes...it's *LEAP YEAR*, so I'm inviting *MOM* to take *US* to dinner!



I got an idea, Dad? Why don't we have a year when we *MOM* are bosses?

THAT'LL be the year, pal!

End

Dear Mr. Lincoln

I am a girl
eleven years old.

I want you should
be President of the
United States very
much.

But without whiskers
your face looks so thin.
I think you should let
your whiskers grow.

If you do, I will
try to get my four
brothers to vote for
you.

Yours respectfully,
Grace Bedell

P. S. All the ladies like
whiskers and they would
trace their husbands to
vote for you, and then
you would be President!

G. B.

AT HIS home in Springfield, Ill., in the fall of 1860, Abraham Lincoln read this letter and smiled.

It amused him to think that this little girl believed he could literally "win by a whisker" the highest office in the land, in this terrible time of crisis.

The problem of slavery was before the people. Just last year, John Brown had led his bloody raid on Harper's Ferry in an attempt to arouse a revolution of the slaves. Several of the Southern States were ready to leave the Union. And Lincoln himself was in the midst of a struggle to win his party's nomination as candidate for President.

Then he glanced into a mirror.



Abraham Lincoln before he grew his beard.

His face was thin, and always had been. Long hours of hard work and study since boyhood had left him gaunt, though tremendously strong. And he had never worn whiskers, though most men of his time did.

On his mind were all the vital problems of the country, and his deep desire to be President and try to solve them. Yet, to do so he would need votes, and in political campaigns, he well knew, voters are influenced by many things—some large, some small.

Perhaps this young girl, Grace Bedell, was right. Although women at that time could not vote, it was true that they had great influence on their husbands—and most women thought whiskers attractive. Most men, too, thought that a beard was a sign of seriousness and dignity.

Lincoln sat down and wrote to Grace Bedell in Westfield, N. Y., thanking her for her suggestion. Soon after, his associates noticed that he was beginning to grow the beard that is now so well known to us from Lincoln's head on our postage stamps and pennies.

Of course, Lincoln won the election. But was it because he grew a beard? The election was fought on the basis of North against South, on the principles of slavery and the rights of States to leave the Union—all great issues that were to result in one of the most terrible of wars. And yet, who can say that the fact Lincoln now wore a beard, customary in his time, did not have some influence on the voters?

Looking at the two pictures, of Lincoln clean-shaven and Lincoln as most of us know him, which would you have voted for?

Although few men wear beards any more, isn't it true that when Lincoln was clean-shaven he looked gaunt, thin, comparatively inexperienced? And on the other hand, didn't his beard make him look more dignified, more impressive?

One thing we do know for sure—Lincoln did not forget young Grace Bedell.

In February, 1861, he was on his way by train to Washington, D. C., stopping at

various towns on the way to speak to the crowds of people who came to see him.

When the train stopped at Westfield, N. Y., Lincoln made a speech from the train platform—then he asked if Grace Bedell were in the crowd. The people looked around, wondering who Grace Bedell was, and why the new President would want to talk to her.

Imagine their surprise when a young girl came shyly forward.

"I am Grace Bedell, Mr. President," she said. "Thank you for writing to me."

Abraham Lincoln smiled. "And thank you for writing to me," he answered.

Then, the beard that Grace Bedell had inspired brushed her cheek as, bending down, Lincoln kissed her.

THE END



Lincoln as most of us know him.

Monday



"HOW WILL YOU BOIL HOT WATER, AN' WE'VE GOT A JERKED STOPPED POOL!"

Thursday

Friday



"BUT, ANY SPECIAL TOOLS YOU'D LIKE TO BRING?"



"I WANT YOU TO GO DOWN OFF AFTER I LET ME FLY!"

Tuesday



"I DON'T DO MUCH FOR THIS. DID ANYTHING
SPECIALIZED? LIVE ROOF BUILDING?"

Wednesday



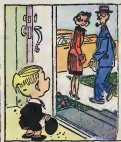
"DO YOU WANT TO BECOME A
TALK AND SOAP ARTIST?"

Saturday



"I WOULD SAY FISH-BITTING, IF YOU DON'T WANT ANY
CATCH, THAT'S JAWAB' COME!"

Sunday



"IN THE GREAT GRAND-DAD? I DON'T WANT ANY OF MY
BROTHERS TO BE AN GROWN LADZ TODAY!"

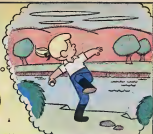
A GRAMPA STORY





I guess you know he threw a silver dollar across the river?

Yeah... that was to show how **STRONG** he was!



Why didn't he just throw a **ROCK**? He was too smart to throw money away...

Gee, I never thought of that!

... HE THREW A DOLLAR ACROSS TO A FRIEND WHO HAD A BOAT FOR SALE...



... AND GEORGE PRACTICED UNTIL HE COULD DO ANYTHING WITH A BOAT!



Do YOU remember anything about George Washington in a boat?

SURE! He crossed the Delaware!

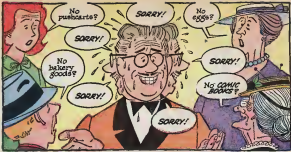




PLAN 4X







END

SAYSO SEESAW











All right, Dennis... what's the idea of chasing the pigeons?

See... I was just **CHECKIN'**!



You'd better come along with me, Dennis!

SNIFF!

You gonna put us in jail?



BAW!

DON'T put JOEY in jail... he didn't do **NOTHIN'**!

Oh, for goch sakes!



It's okay, Joey... I'm **NOT** gonna put **EITHER** of you in jail.

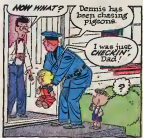
HONESTLY REALLY?

WHY?



I'm just taking you fellows on home.

I know the way, Master Nolin! You don't haveta bother!

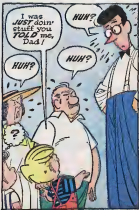


NOW WHAT?

Dennis has been chasing pigeons.

I was just **CHECKIN'**, Dad!

?



SURE! You said 'A rolling stone gathers no moss'...but it sure knocks things down!...

DENNIS! YOU NAUGHTY BOY!

...An' 'The **EARLY** bird gets the worm! but I saw one catch a worm just **NOW!**...**THIS AFTERNOON!**



...An' 'He who laughs last laughs best', but Mister Wilson got **MAD** 'cause I tickled him...



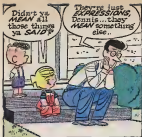
...An' 'A bird in the hands is s'posed to be worth two in a bush...but I couldn't even **CATCH** one!



SO SORRY!... SORRY, WILSON!...if there's anything I can do...

YEAH! Just be **CAREFUL** what you **SAV** to that boy!





END

the Cookie Jar

INSIDE STORIES OF DENNIS THE MENACE

HERE IS YOUR COMIC BOOK "TEAM"

IF YOU had been passing the door of the Fred Toole Advertising Agency back in 1953, you would have heard some talk that would seem very strange in the advertising business:—

"We should have him ring the alarm bell, but he doesn't know what it is—He's just a little boy—he thinks it's the elevator button!"

"Right! He rings the alarm and the cops come to the bank, thinking it's another holdup. Then..."

Talking were advertising man Fred Toole and cartoonist Al Wiseman. Together they were dreaming up the very first "Dennis the Menace" comic book.

Both were friends of Hank Ketchum, who two years before had started "Dennis" as a newspaper cartoon feature. Hank thought "Dennis" would be a "natural" as a comic book. And both men were experienced in the cartoon field—Fred as a gag writer, Al as a cartoonist whose work had appeared in most of the top magazines.

Asked how he gets all his ideas, Fred grins: "Oh, I just scratch my head until something comes out." Actually, he is always watching for situations wherever he goes, thinking: "Now, what would a mischievous little boy do here?" He has



Fred Toole, writer

taken "Dennis" many places—to the circus, aboard a battleship, an Army camp—even to Heaven.

Sometimes Al protests: "Don't make the stories so complicated, Fred!" But whatever Fred describes in the script, Al tries to draw faithfully. Al is one of the most painstaking cartoonists in the country. He draws every object from real life or from photographs, and whether he draws a skyscraper or an Army tank, you may be sure that it is accurate and educational.

The Dennis comics have been so successful that recently two additional artists have been added to the staff: Bruce Aron, former TV, motion picture, and ad agency art director, and new "girl Friday" Tuesday Smith, former Milwaukee commercial artist and children's librarian.

That's your comic book team—and they hope you'll continue to enjoy their efforts for many books to come!



Al Wiseman, cartoonist

Their first book was okayed by Hank, and proceeded to make comic book history. While most comic books sell 50% or 60% of the copies printed, that first "Dennis" book sold almost 100%—something unheard of in comic book publishing. Fred and Al immediately quit the advertising business to work full time on the dozens of "Dennis" books they have produced since that day in 1953.

